

# THE WEEK at the THEATRES

Scene from "Parsifal" National

## 'Parsifal' and Others

### Savage or Conried?—Two Great Casts—Real Light Comedy.

Washington awoke to "Parsifal" long before the American production in New York. The plans were made, of course, familiar, and whatever may be said of New York, a sufficient number of Washingtonians had gone to Bayreuth to spread the story of the opera as it is produced by Frau Cosima.

But the Capital has been at least stirred up by the American production, and now it is genuinely excited. The sale of seats on Thursday broke every record for Washington. Prof. Goldmark's admirable lecture was attended by thousands, and enough people were turned away to fill the National again. Thousands of books on "Parsifal" have been sold within the fortnight, and it is anticipated that the newspaper comment on the opera will be the most sought-for news of the week.

Many of our townsmen went to Baltimore to see the Savage production, and a few went to New York to see the Conried production. They are all enthusiastic. But the two camps are violently hostile. The Savage partisans protesting that no performance of "Parsifal" could possibly outdo that given in Baltimore, and the Conried party answering contemptuously that New York has the only real production of "Parsifal" in the United States.

#### Extraordinary "Road" Enterprise.

This was to be expected. But it is not all that has happened. A score of critics, or thereabouts, have seen both productions; and not a few of them are of the opinion that the Savage production is the better of the two. It may be. And it may not be. But even New York admits that the rivalry is keen and that the Savage production, being a "road" enterprise, is the greater achievement of the two. And on the authority of "The Times," the Savage production of "Parsifal" whatever its relation to the Conried production is the most complete and impressive performance of an opera ever offered to Washington.

The casts are distributed as follows: Mme. Kirby-Lunn as Kundry, Monday and Thursday evenings and Saturday matinee.

Mr. Pennarini as Parsifal, Mr. Egenleff as Amfortas, Mr. Griswold as Gurnemanz, Mr. Lind as Klingsor, Monday and Thursday evenings, and Saturday matinee.

Mme. Haney as Kundry, Mr. MacLennan as Parsifal, Mr. Bischoff as Amfortas, Mr. Cranston as Gurnemanz, Mr. Coombs as Klingsor, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday evenings.

Both casts were received as true grand opera by the exciting cries of New York.

#### A Touch of Spice.

Frank Daniels will offer the entire to the "Parsifal" engagement. His impersonation of "The Office Boy" is genuine mirth lifted to the stage. Both farce and the impersonation are familiar—but this is no detriment. It is, on the contrary, the strongest recommendation.

The Lafayette follows Willard Holcomb's routing "Knockout" with "Paris by Night." Chase's will offer a bill of "Anniversary Vaudeville." The Academy gives a new lease of life to "A Desperate Chance," and the Lyceum presents "The Blue Ribbon Girls." So much for next week.

Mr. Drew's "Duke of Killarney" is another "Marriage of Kitty." If the theatergoer would know how thoroughly delightful light comedy can be he should see a performance of either of these two works. The testimony of half the actors of history is that light comedy is the most difficult thing to act, and the rarest thing to find to act. If that be true, comedies like "The Duke of Killarney" ought to last a good actor like John Drew more than a single season.

George Coles's musical comedy was well received. Elsewhere the attendance was extraordinary. Washington has been quick to recover from its holiday apathy. "Parsifal" need not overshadow the whole theatrical season. The announcements for succeeding weeks will have interest of their own.

#### At the Theaters.

##### National—Wagner's "Parsifal."

Henry W. Savage's production of "Parsifal" in English will be presented at the National Theater during the week of January 15. It will be produced in strict accordance with Bayreuth custom and tradition. The chief detail of this system is in beginning the first act at 8:30 in the evening and at 11 a. m. for the matinee. The schedule for both performances follows:

Evening—First act at 8:30; dinner intermission from 7:15 to 8:30; carriages at 10:20.

Matinee—First act at 11 a. m.; lunch intermission from 12:45 to 1:45; carriages at 4.

Two other Bayreuth customs are ob-

served, in giving warning of the rise of the curtain on each act by having a squad of trumpeters play a "Parsifal" motif in the lobby of the theater and an insistence upon the rule that there shall be no applause. It will be impossible to seat anyone once the house is darkened and the conductor is in his chair. The rule in regard to applause will be readily appreciated, and has been accepted everywhere as fit.

The production at hand is the result of more than a year's planning, the different obstacles encountered and overcome making it the most considerable undertaking in the history of opera in this country. The main difficulties were the translation of the book into singable English; the engagement of the principals who could sing in English or who could learn; the instruction of all at the Bayreuth performances; the construction of scenery and appliances for lighting and mechanical effects that could be made adjustable to the necessities of transportation and to stages of different sizes.

All this was done so well that H. E. Krebber, of the "New York Tribune," was moved to say:

"Parsifal" was presented in a manner that compelled the wonder and respect of the knowing, as well as the innocent."

H. T. Finck said in the "New York Evening Post":

"Nothing in the way of English opera has been done in this country to equal this 'Parsifal.'"

The principals include Mme. Kirby-Lunn, Mme. Haney, Miss Marguerite Liddell, Miss Florence Wickham, Alois Pennarini, Francis MacLennan, and Christian De Voss—all the foregoing being severely occupied with the parts of Kundry and Parsifal. Johannes Bischoff and Franz Egenleff alternate as Amfortas, and Otley Cranston and Putnam Griswold both sing Gurnemanz. The role of Klingsor falls to J. Parker Coombs and Homer Lind.

The flower maiden's chorus is made up of twenty-four singers, who were the final selections out of a total of two hundred applicants. In the solo parts are two former leading women of light opera reputation—Miss Pearl Guzman and Miss Celeste Wynne. Measurably, the same care has been taken in forming the chorus of esquires, the procedure in the case of each chorus having been the notification of music teachers of the chance for their pupils to study Wagnerian methods under expert guidance.

The persons concerned in the presentation of "Parsifal" number within a few of 200, including principals, choruses, orchestra, the mechanical and business staffs. There are five sixty-foot carloads of scenery and properties, and five other cars are needed for the transportation of the company.

No other opportunity will ever be afforded to study the crowning work of Wagner's genius. The difficulties of a "road" production, it can be seen, are enormous, and no other main but Mr. Savage would have the courage to put "Parsifal" on tour. In this connection it may be said that "Parsifal" is presented in this country at a smaller scale of prices than in Bayreuth, where seats are 20 marks (\$4) each, and where—singularly enough—speculators have the controlling interest.

##### Columbia—Frank Daniels in "The Office Boy."

Charles B. Dillingham will bring to the Columbia Theater this week Frank Daniels, who will appear for the second time in Washington in the musical comedy, "The Office Boy."

"The Office Boy" played with great success in this city last winter, and has since made an extended tour of the country. The authors of the piece are Harry B. Smith, who wrote the libretto, and Ludwig Engländer, who provided the music. Both these gentlemen have written many successes; Mr. Smith, indeed, having already provided Mr. Daniels with two of his best operas, "The Wizard of the Nile" and "The Idol's Eye."

Both the author and composer were familiar with Mr. Daniels' quaint personality and comedy methods, and in "The Office Boy" Mr. Smith has provided some smart lyrics and snappy dialogues, while Mr. Engländer, who has been dubbed the "American Strauss," has furnished many swinging melodies and catchy airs, as will be remembered by those who saw the piece last year.

##### Lafayette—"Paris by Night."

The musical comedy, "Paris by Night," will be seen at the Lafayette Square Theater next week, beginning with Monday evening, January 16, with the usual matinee on Wednesday and Saturday, headed by Bert Leslie and Robert L. Dalley, under the management of Weber & Bush. The announcement that "Paris by Night" had an all summer run at the Madison Square Garden, New York, and is the only summer offering of the kind ever to have been successful at that resort, and was also one of the few attractions that was able to continue throughout the whole of the heated term. It is being sent on tour by Messrs. Weber and Bush with prac-



Frank Daniels in "The Office Boy" Columbia

## WHEN FRANK DANIELS DROVE PATRONS HOME

Comedian Turned Whip for Coach and Four, While in Baltimore, With No Fatalities.

Frank Daniels' love for animals is well known. Since the days of Hoyt's "A Rag Baby," when he starred as "Old Sport" and was ably supported by the famous English bulldog "Handsome," there have probably been more animal stories published about him than any other actor. Daniels' trained chickens on his farm at Rye, N. Y.; his performing spider monkey, his conversational cockatoo, his Boston bull, "Charlie"—a canine incubator, who bitches eggs in his mouth—and his team of milk white Spanish mules, have all come in for their share of newspaper notoriety.

Lately Mr. Daniels has gone in almost exclusively for blooded horses, and has a fine stable at his Rye farm. He prides himself on being a good whip, and is never so proud as when he is driving a coach and four along the splendid roads of Westchester county. Last season in Baltimore, immediately after his Washington engagement, his ability as a driver was put to the test.

Owing to the lack of street car service, due to the awful fire which devastated the business section of the city, it was difficult and inconvenient for theatergoers to get to the theater. In the emergency Daniels' manager devised a scheme. Aided by the local

managers, an omnibus line was established, which transported, free of charge, all passengers who held tickets for Mr. Daniels' performance of "The Office Boy." It proved an excellent idea, and crowded houses were the result. One evening, however, after the performance, a big bus and four horses were found without a driver in front of the theater. The coach was crowded with passengers desirous of returning to their homes. The coachman, it appeared, had slipped on the icy sidewalk, broken an ankle, and was at that moment lying in the corner drug store waiting for the ambulance to take him to the hospital.

In the crisis, a volunteer driver was called for. None appeared until Mr. Daniels emerged from the stage door, attired in his very latest and loveliest fawn-colored and pearl-buttoned coat.

Should his patrons be allowed to wait? Not on your life! Without a moment's hesitation, the sturdy comedian mounted the driver's seat, seized the reins, and with a crack of the whip the quartet of equines started off. It is on record that Mr. Daniels made the trip on schedule time and safely landed all his passengers at their destinations.

Gifford will exert his talents in anecdote and mimicry in a way expected to be highly pleasing. Mr. Gifford was one of the standbys of Charles Hoyt at the zenith of his success as a farce writer, and more recently he was conspicuous in "The Liberty Bells" and "Mr. Bluebeard." James O. Barrows, John Lancaster & Co. have a one-act play, "When Georgia Was Eighteen," from the pen of Robert Burns Mantle, the critic of the "Chicago Inter Ocean." It is said to fit both Mr. Barrows and Mr. Lancaster admirably. It tells the story of an amorous and gives Mr. Barrows an opportunity, as justice of the peace, to join two happy hearts in stage wedlock.

The Original Kaufmann Troupe, a "bicycle family," the Castle Square Quartet, composed of well-known singers, for two seasons with the Castle Square Opera Company; Emil Hoch, Jane Elton & Co. in "Mile, Rice," and Ver Camp, a magician, are also in the bill. The motion pictures of Niagara Falls are said to be especially fine and interesting.

Academy—"A Desperate Chance." The Academy will present this week the sensational melodrama from the pen of Theodore Kremer, "A Desperate Chance." The incidents surrounding the trial and escape of the celebrated Blanche Sands, his character portraiture, Mr.

structure of the play. While Mr. Kremer has followed as near as practicable the facts of the case, he has of course elaborated and added so that the play includes a story of heart interest and much comedy.

##### Lyceum—"Blue Ribbon Girls."

"The Blue Ribbon Girls" will be at the Lyceum Theater this week. The burlesques will be "Caught With the Goods" and "A Day at the Races." The leading comedians are W. H. Ward, William Kent, Lew Palmer, Paul Le Roy, Ira Kassar and Tom La Venon.

##### Forthcoming Concerts.

###### D'Albert With Symphony Tonight.

Eugen d'Albert, regarded by Europe as the greatest living pianist, will present three views of his genius at the Lyceum Theater tonight by the Washington Symphony Orchestra, Reginald de Koven, conductor, and the program will be noteworthy further because of the appearance of Mme. Fink d'Albert, the virtuosa wife, a grand opera singer famous in Europe. For the first time the audience will be enabled to hear the great pianist's incomparable playing, and also hear a group of four of his own songs, sung by Mme. Fink d'Albert, while the composer leads the orchestra in the interpretation of his compositions. Mme. Fink d'Albert has been in retirement musically since her marriage to the virtuoso, but owing to her wish to sing before American audiences her participation in fifteen of the d'Albert concerts in the principal cities when accompanying her husband will mark her first work. The box office will open at 3 p. m. today. The program in full is as follows:

Overture, "The Water Carrier," Cherubini. Piano Concerto No. 1, Liszt. Eugen d'Albert. Symphony No. 5, Tchaikovsky. (1) Andante, Allegro. Con Anima; (2) Andante, Cantabile; (3) Valse; (4) Andante, Allegro, Vivace. Suite, Op. 10, No. 3, Schumann. (5) Songs, Op. 10, No. 3, Schumann. (6) Songs, Op. 10, No. 3, Schumann. (7) Songs, Op. 10, No. 3, Schumann. (8) Songs, Op. 10, No. 3, Schumann. (9) Songs, Op. 10, No. 3, Schumann. (10) Songs, Op. 10, No. 3, Schumann. (11) Songs, Op. 10, No. 3, Schumann. (12) Songs, Op. 10, No. 3, Schumann. (13) Songs, Op. 10, No. 3, Schumann. (14) Songs, Op. 10, No. 3, Schumann. (15) Songs, Op. 10, No. 3, Schumann.

Violinist von Vecsey Tuesday. Franz von Vecsey, the violin prodigy, has arrived in New York, and will be introduced to musical America by Daniel Frohman, and will play at the Columbia Theater, in this city, Tuesday afternoon, at 4:30 o'clock.

At Joachim's request von Vecsey played a number of that composer's cadenzas. Joachim exclaimed to those assembled in the little studio:

"He is the most marvelous example of a musical prodigy I have ever encountered. I cannot explain it. He is beginning where everyone else has left off."

Seats are now on sale at T. Arthur Smith's, Sanders & Stayman's.

##### Faculty Concert Friday.

The second of the series of faculty concerts by the Washington College of Music will take place next Friday evening at the Willard banquet hall. The soloist on this occasion will be Samuel M. Fabian. The Rakemann String Quartet will make its first appearance on this occasion. It is composed of Herman C. Rakemann, first violin;

No play or opera makes such exacting demands on the ingenuity of the scene painter and stage-mechanic as Wagner's "Parsifal." Not only are the five scenes which constitute the decorations of massive proportion, but for the two great panoramas which depict the progress of Parsifal from the forest to the Temple of the Grail, and the two transformation scenes in the second act—the first when Klingsor's castle gives way to the magic flower garden; the second when the magic flower garden is turned into a story desert by the aim of the cross made by Parsifal with the sacred spear—particularly complicated stage machinery is needed.

The production of such a work under the best conditions is a formidable undertaking, even when it is meant for one theater which has been specially built for such a purpose, like, for example, the Festival Play House, at Bayreuth. But Mr. Savage intended to take "Parsifal" through the country, and in order to do this, and yet retain all the scenic effects which are absolutely necessary to the illusion, he was compelled to devise numerous novelties in the way of mechanism which could be easily transported.

For example, no theaters in the country are equipped with the elaborate system of lights that "Parsifal" requires, so it became necessary to provide a complete equipment for stage lighting which could be carried from place to place in small compass. All that "Parsifal" wants when it comes into a theater is a stage and sufficient current of electricity. The company brings all its own lamps, and a huge switchboard which controls all the complicated lighting effects. It is so made that it can be carried around in two packing cases. It is ten feet long and weighs 3,400 lbs. The company likewise carries a steam generator which furnishes the cloud in which Kundry appears when summoned by Klingsor's incantations in the second act.

Among the other properties carried is what is familiarly known behind the scenes as "The Chute." It is a large portable "dressing-room" made of canvas, which when carried about folds up in small compass. At one end of this is a door which swings out, and inside it the twenty-four flower maidens are allowed thirty seconds to get out of one costume and into another.

When Parsifal first appears on the wall overlooking Klingsor's Magic Garden, he sees the magical maidens dressed in light, gauzy stuffs. They have just been awakened from their sleep by the battle between Parsifal and their Knights. At first they are terribly frightened by this bold hero; then their curiosity gets the better of them, and they all make love to him. In order better to do this they go off the stage and take off the gauze, replacing it with costumes which represent gorgeous tropical flowers.

The temporary dressing room has been placed in the wings and hanging on its wall, each in its place, are the new costumes; six dresses are there waiting for the girls to come. The music allows twelve to come at a time. They rush through one door in one costume and through the other door in the other costume before the audience has really appreciated that they have been away.

be announced as the Burton Holmes Travelogue, Mr. Holmes making the distinction that one only hears a lecture, but experiences a "travelogue." In other words, through the liberal use of truthful and realistic motion pictures, and finely colored still views, the "stay-at-homes" find in a travelogue a capital substitute for actual personal travel.

Mr. Holmes' subjects for this season are "In London," "Round About London," "Beautiful Ireland," "The Russian Empire" and "Japan." The number of motion pictures has been increased in each travelogue, and they are longer and much more varied than ever before. While the still pictures, as heretofore, will be shown more rapidly so that their number will remain about the same as in former seasons, the first three subjects are new, as Mr. Holmes obtained the material only this last summer.

##### Ernest Thompson Seton Lecture.

Magazine readers and the school children especially who have read with delight articles from the pen of Ernest Thompson Seton, as well as those who have read his books, will be pleased to learn that arrangements have been completed to have Mr. Seton lecture at the New National Theater, Saturday morning, at 11 o'clock, January 28.

During the last season Mr. Seton has traveled and lectured twenty-six weeks, averaging ten lectures a week. He has covered 20,000 miles of territory, including Utah, California, Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, and Ontario. During that time he has addressed over

##### Coming Attractions.

###### Burton Holmes Coming.

The Burton Holmes lectures will soon be given in this city. Since the successful season of this popular traveler, photographer and lecturer in London last spring, this form of entertainment will



Belk Plunkett "Paris by Night" Lafayette